U.S. Department of Education
Office of Educational Research and Improvement

Preschool Curriculum Evaluation Research Grants
Pre-Application Meeting

January 24, 2002

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Preschool Curriculum Evaluation Research Grants
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Agenda
January 24, 2002

1:00 – 1:20   **Welcome and Introductions**
Heidi Schweingruber, Ph.D., Program Officer
Naomi Karp, Director, Institute for Early Childhood Development and Education
Valerie Reyna, Ph.D., Senior Research Advisor
Grover Whitehurst, Ph.D., Assistant Secretary of Education

1:20 – 1:50   **Nuts & Bolts of the Application and Funding Process**
Heidi Schweingruber, Elizabeth Payer (OERI) & Pat Knight (OERI)

- Anticipated time-line
- Overview of parts of the application
- E-application process
- Q & A

1:50 –2:20   **Role of National Contractor**
Heidi Schweingruber

- Contractor's responsibilities and grantee's responsibilities
- Data collection instruments
- Q & A

BREAK 2:20 – 2:30

2:30 - 3:15   **Technical Issues**
Invited speaker: David Arnold, Ph.D. University of Massachusetts at Amherst

- Evaluation design
- Working with sites
- Q & A

3:15 – 3:30   **Complementary Research Studies**

3:30 – 4:00   **General Q & A**

Helpful Web Sites

Federal Register notice for the PCER grant program

http://www.ed.gov/legislation/FedRegister/announcements/index.html

Downloadable application package (PDF or Word)

http://www.ed.gov/offices/OERI/news.html

Site where you will be able to access minutes of the pre-application meeting

http://www.ed.gov/offices/OERI/

E-application page

http://e-grants.ed.gov

FACES instruments

http://www2.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/hsb/hsreac/faces/instruments.html

Eager to Learn (Report of the National Research Council)

http://www.nap.edu/catalog/9745.html

White House Summit on Early Childhood Cognitive Development

http://www.ed.gov/PressReleases/07-2001/wh-07262001.html

What Should I Know About ED Grants? (A publication of the Dept of Ed)

http://www.ed.gov/pubs/KnowAbtGrants/

Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR)

http://www.ed.gov/offices/OCFO/grants/edgar.html

Anticipated Timeline

March 15   Receipt of applications at Dept of Ed

Mid-May
to Early June)   Award date

June or July   Orientation meeting with national contractor

Year 1   Implementation of Curriculum
   Fall 2002 Data collection in Pre-K classrooms
   Spring 2003 Data collection in Pre-K classrooms

Year 2   Follow-up data collection in Kindergarten classrooms
        (In some cases, there may be a new cohort of Pre-K students
        initiated in Year 2)

Year 3   Follow-up data collection in first grade classrooms
        (Follow-up data collection in Kindergarten classrooms for second
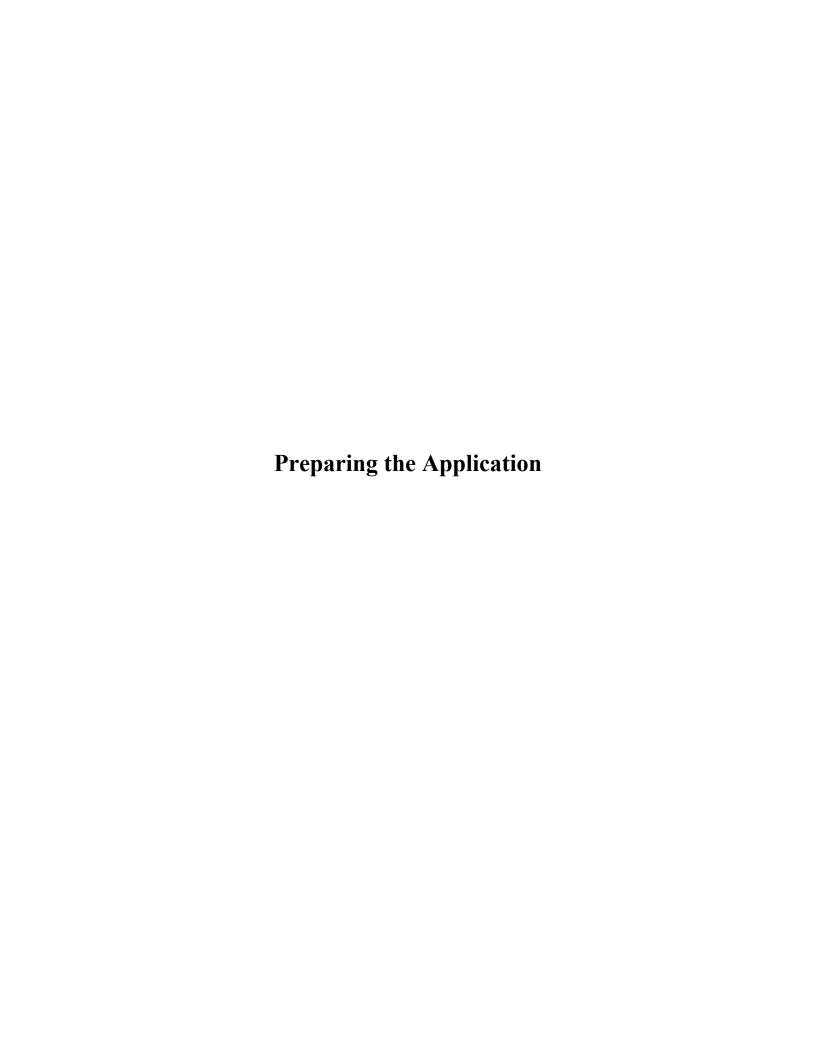   cohort)

Year 4   Completion of data analysis and reports
        (Follow up data collection in first grade classrooms for second
        cohort)

NOTE: Complementary research designs may involve continued pre-K implementations and ongoing research in the pre-K settings for some or all years of the grant.

Preparing the Application

Application Checklist

Does your application include each of the following?

[ ]   **Title Page Form (ED 424)**

[ ]   **Abstract**

[ ]   **Research Narrative (respond to selection criteria)**

[ ]   **Literature Cited**

[ ]   **Curriculum Vitae of Principal Investigator (s) and Other Key Personnel**

[ ]   **Budget Summary Form (ED 524) and Budget Narrative**

[ ]   **Appendix**

[ ]   **Statement of Equitable Access (GEPA 427 Statement)**

[ ]   **Assurances and Certifications**

Did You --

[ ]   **Provide one (1) original plus 2 copies of the application, if you elected to submit your application as paper copy?**

[ ]   **Include all required forms with original signatures and dates?**

Preparing the Application

Format Guidelines

- Limit research narrative to 25 pages (includes text, figures, charts, tables and diagrams)

- Limit appendix to 20 pages

- A page is 8.5" x 11" on one side only with 1" margins at the top, bottom, and both sides

- Double space all text, including titles, headings, footnotes, quotations, references, and captions, as well as all text in charts, tables, figures and graphs.

- Use font that is 12-point or larger.

*** Page limit does NOT apply to the title page form, the one-page abstract, the budget summary form and the narrative budget justification, the curriculum vitae, literature cited, or the assurances and certifications.

The Abstract

- Convey the specific goals of the study, including the goals of any proposed complementary research

- Use language that will be understandable by a range of audiences. If your application is funded, the abstract may be used to publicize the study.

- The abstract should include:

  1) Theoretical and conceptual background of the study (i.e., prior research that this investigation builds upon and that provides a compelling rationale for this study).

  2) Research issues, hypotheses, and questions being addressed

  3) Study design: Include a brief description of the sample including sample size, methods, principal dependent, independent, and control variables, and the approach to data analysis.

  4) Significance and implications (the contributions/outcomes expected from this work for research, policy, practice etc)

Preparing the Application

The Research Narrative

- Clearly address each of the review criteria:

    National Significance (.2)
    Quality of the Project Design (.5)
    Quality and Potential Contributions of Personnel (.2)
    Adequacy of Resources (.1)

- Include a literature review

    - Indicate that you understand the current research literature

    - Present the review in a logical and explicit manner

    - Use the literature review to guide reviewers through your thinking and reasoning, step by step

- Write a rigorous research plan in simple and clear language

    - Rationale for the curriculum selected
        Show that the guidelines in the announcement are met. Discuss the following questions (if relevant):

        1. What scientific research supports the use of this curriculum to improve school readiness?
        2. What levels of staff qualifications are required?
        3. What training and materials are needed?
        4. What are the costs of the curriculum in terms of materials and professional training and support?
        5. How is classroom or program practice likely to be affected?
        6. How will fidelity of the curriculum be maintained over the program year(s)?
        7. What are possible program staff or family barriers to acceptance and how will they be addressed?

Preparing the Application

The Research Narrative (con…)

- Design of the evaluation study

1. Describe your sample – including sites, classrooms, students
2. Describe how your sample captures diversity in the preschool population
3. Describe control and intervention conditions
4. Explain procedures for random assignment
5. Discuss attrition and how it will be dealt with
6. Describe any incentives that will be used to encourage sites to participate
7. Discuss variations in the structure of participating preschool programs (length of day; public/private, etc.) and how they will be taken into consideration in the design

Appendix

- Do NOT put required details in an appendix in order to save space.

- Include ALL information essential for evaluating/rating the application in the research narrative.

- Examples of appropriate material for the appendices:

- Full content of an assessment, survey instrument, etc.

- Letters of support that document relationships/collaborations
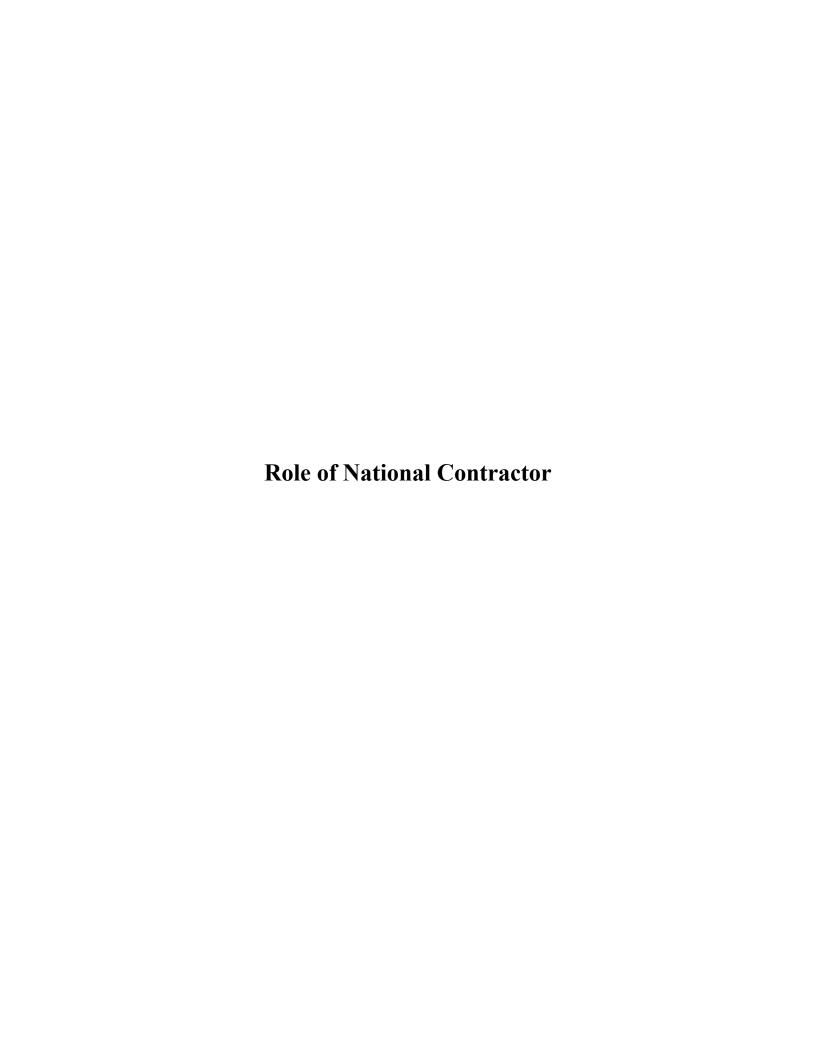
Quality of Personnel

- Explain why your team is the best qualified to do the proposed work.

- Use charts, diagrams, and/or tables to show timelines, tasks and staff responsibilities

- Provide names, resumes, and responsibilities of all consultants and WHY they were selected. Include letters of commitment in the appendix.

Preparing the Application

The Budget

- Make sure key staff are in the budget, with salaries, time commitments, fringe benefits

- Clarify how equipment, supplies, incentives for participants, and travel requests will be used

- Add the numbers correctly

- Be sure to include the budget information sheet or budget summary form AND the narrative.

Protection of Human Subjects

- Determine if your proposed work is exempt.

- Complete any forms required prior to submitting the application.

- Begin the Institutional Review Board process as soon as possible as this is a long procedure that has the potential to hold up grant awards.

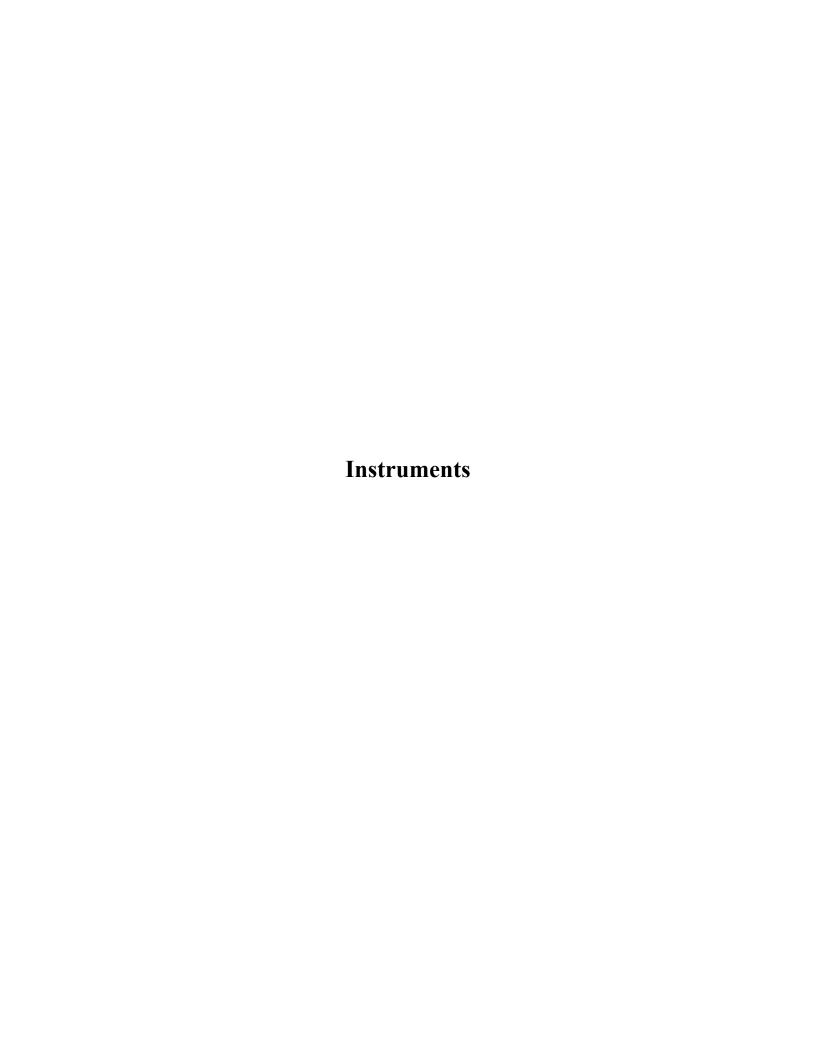# Role of National Contractor

Grantee's Responsibilities

1) Obtain agreement of sites to participate
   ** Letter of cooperation MUST be included in application. This letter should clearly outline responsibilities of the preschool program.

2) Obtain agreement of sites to random assignment of children or classrooms
   ** Agreement to random assignment should be included in the letter of cooperation

3) Obtain informed consent of parents of children participating
   ** Parental consent is NOT required for the application. It IS required prior to start of data collection. Grantee WILL be required to get continued consent for kindergarten and first grade.

4) Obtain informed consent of teachers and administrators from whom data will be collected
   ** This consent is NOT required for the application. It IS required prior to start of data collection.

5) Provide all necessary materials and professional development to teachers and staff to implement the curriculum

6) Make all on-site arrangements necessary for the national contractor to conduct assessments of participating children and classrooms
   ** Contractor will work with grantee's site coordinators to make sure arrangements are made

7) Obtain parent and teacher interview data
   ** See the FACES instruments

8) Provide an on-site coordinator to manage all aspects of data collection, curriculum implementation, and interaction with the national contractor.

9) Tracking students into kindergarten and 1st grade

Contractor's Responsibilities

- Training of data collection staff

- Data collection using FACES battery

Year1	Fall 2002 and Spring 20032 in pre-K classrooms
Year 2	Follow-up in kindergarten classrooms
	Additional Pre-K cohort in some sites
Year 3	Follow-up in first grade classrooms
	Follow-up in kindergarten classrooms for some sites
Year 4	Follow-up in 1st grade classrooms for some sites

- Support to grantee's site coordinators for arranging data collection and tracking students

- Creation of datasets, cleaning of data, return of data to grantees

- Monitoring of data quality

- Cross-site analysis of data

- Hosting of meetings with grantees, federal staff, and contractor's representatives

- Review of grantees' yearly work plans (evaluation portion only)

Instruments

FACES Instruments

Child measures:

http://www2.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/hsb/hsreac/faces/child.html

Parent measures:

http://www2.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/hsb/hsreac/faces/parent.html

Staff measures:

http://www2.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/hsb/hsreac/faces/staff.html

Learning environment:

http://www2.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/hsb/hsreac/faces/class.html